

REMARKS

Claims 29-48 stand rejected in the Office Action dated November 6, 2007 in view of Excel (Microsoft® Excel 2000, Copyright (c) 1985-1999 Microsoft Corp.), (“Excel”).

Independent claims 29 and 38 have been amended. No claims have been canceled or added. Therefore, following the present response, claims 29-48 will be pending in this application.

Examiner Interview

The undersigned would like to thank examiner Andrey Belousov and his supervisor Steven Sax for conducting an interview on January 23, 2009. During the interview, the examiner and the undersigned discussed the features of claim 38 with respect to the cited art, Excel. The undersigned pointed out to the examiner that the recited property of the gridline is a property set *for the gridline* and defines a relationship of the gridline *to* the user-interface element on the canvas. Thus, the property is a property of the gridline *itself*, and not a setting of an element on the canvas. In contradistinction, the only settings shown in Excel are those set for the *element*, not the gridline.

To clarify what is implicitly recited in the claims, the undersigned proposed possible claim amendments and those amendments are set forth below, described in light of the interview. An agreement was not reached, but the Examiner stated that he would further consider the points raised in the interview and any additional remarks included in the present response.

Claims 38-48

Claims 38-48 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable in view of by Excel (Microsoft® Excel 2000, Copyright (c) 1985-1999 Microsoft Corp.), (“Excel”).

Independent claim 38 recites a method for creating a grid canvas comprising defining a virtual gridline, identifying a user-interface element on the grid canvas, and identifying a relationship of the virtual gridline to the user-interface element. The user-interface element may be placed on the canvas either before or after the virtual gridline is defined on the canvas. As amended, a property set *for the gridline* defines a relationship of the gridline *to* the user-interface element on the canvas. That setting is used to determine the layout of the

user-interface element on the canvas. Thus, if a property of one of the plurality of components on the canvas is changed, not only is the relationship between the gridline and the user-interface element maintained, but the layout of the user-interface element on the canvas *is a function of the property set for the gridline*. Furthermore, the relationship between the gridline and the user-interface is bi-directional such that resizing the user-defined element will move the gridline and moving the gridline will resize the user-defined element. Applicants submit that Excel does not teach the elements of claim 38.

The Office Action asserts that the geometric shown in Fig. 7 of Excel (Office Action dated 12/05/08, Fig. 7) teaches “identifying a relationship of the virtual gridline to the user-interface element on the canvas.” However, during the interview, the undersigned pointed out that the geometric setting for Figure 7 (*i.e.*, setting a property of the image so that the image moves and sizes with cells) is specific *to the image* on the canvas. In other words, Excel depicts a setting for the image, from the perspective of the image, and does *not* teach a property of the gridline. Thus, Excel’s setting for the image is not a property set for the *gridline* that defines a relationship of the gridline *to* the image, but rather defines a property of the *image* that defines a relationship of the image to the gridline. The importance of the distinction between a property set for the gridline vs. the element is described throughout the Background section of Applicant’s Specification, which describes the inefficiency of prior art layout techniques.

Furthermore, Applicants pointed out during the interview that Excel does not teach that the layout of the element on the canvas is a function of that property set for the gridline. Resizing and maintaining relationships based on a setting from the perspective of the gridline is not taught by Excel.

The examiner suggested that Applicants clarify the distinctions discussed during the interview in the recitation of the claim. Thus, Applicants have amended claim 38 to explicitly recite what was already implicit. In particular, claim 38 was amended to recite identifying a property set for *the virtual gridline*, wherein the property defines a relationship of the gridline *to* the user-interface element, and further determining a layout of the user-interface element on the canvas, wherein the layout of the user-interface element is determined by the property set for the gridline.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that the claims patentably define over Excel and request withdrawal of the rejection of claims 38-48.

Applicants also submit that Excel does not teach:

“maintaining the relationship of the virtual gridline to the user-interface element on the canvas, wherein the relationship is bidirectional, and resizing the user-interface element will move the gridline, and moving the gridline will resize the user-interface element.”

The relationship in Excel between the element and the gridline, shown in Figs. 6-8, is not bi-directional as claimed. In the instance of Excel’s image depicted in Figs. 6-8, Excel does not function to result in both a resizing of the image upon movement of a gridline *and* the movement of a gridline upon resizing of the image, as claimed. The Office Action only addresses the second aspect of “moving the gridline will resize the user-interface element.” The claims recites both aspects of the bi-directional relationship, *i.e.*, resizing of the image upon movement of a gridline *and* the movement of a gridline upon resizing of the image. Nowhere is Excel shown to teach both aspects of the relationship, and thus, does not teach a bi-directional relationship.

Furthermore, the relationship is not maintained as a function of the property *of the gridline*. Rather, as shown in Fig. 7 of the Office Action, moving the gridline resizes the image as a function of a setting selected *for the image*.

Because Excel does not teach all of the elements of claim 38, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 patentably defines over Excel. As claims 39-48 depend from claim 38, Applicants respectfully submit that these claims are also not anticipated by Excel for the reasons explained above, and respectfully request that the rejection of claims 38-38 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 be withdrawn.

Claims 29-48

Claim 29 is directed to a grid canvas comprising a canvas, a gridline on the canvas, and a user-defined element that spans multiple cells on the canvas. Amendments similar to those made to claim 38 were made to claim 29. Thus, Applicants submit that Excel does not teach the features of claim 29 for the reasons stated above with respect to claim 38.

In particular, Excel does not teach a property of the gridline, wherein the property defines a relationship of the gridline to the user-interface element on the canvas and that a layout of the user-interface element on the canvas is determined by the setting of the gridline.

Because Excel does not teach the features of claim 29, Applicants submit that claim 29 patentably defines over the cited reference. Claims 30-37 that depend from claim 29 are likewise allowable. Independent claim 38, which recites a method for creating a grid canvas with features of the grid canvas recited in claim 29, has been amended similar to claim 29. Therefore, for the foregoing reasons regarding claim 29, Applicant submits that claim 38 and claims 39-48 are likewise allowable.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the application and an early Notice of Allowance are respectfully requested. The Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney, Lori Anne D. Swanson (215.564.8997) to discuss the resolution of any remaining issues.

Regards,

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